



## Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS) Update on the Development of the Family and Youth Strategy

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CDMH Contact – Kathleen Carter Nishimura  
(916) 651-6613

**Background:** In November 2008, United States Central District Court Judge A. Howard Matz approved a “TBS Nine-Point Plan” that establishes methods and measures to increase access and utilization of Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS) in California.

Important themes of the Nine-Point Plan are family and youth involvement and consistent application and awareness of cultural competency practices and services. The TBS Family and Youth Strategy supports implementation of:

- Point 3 - informing about TBS;
- Point 6 - encouraging and empowering family and youth to engage at the local level; and
- Point 8 - training and building parent and youth capacity.

The plan was developed through an interest-based decision-making process facilitated by the Court’s Special Master, Richard Saletta, to help resolve the issues of a decade-long lawsuit, *Emily Q v. Bonta*. The California Department of Mental Health (CDMH) continues to support the plan along with its contractors, the California Department of Health Care Services (CDHCS), the Emily Q Settlement Team, and a stakeholder-consultant group known as the TBS Accountability, Communications and Training (Super TACT) Team.

In Fall 2009, CDMH recognized a need to promote strategies, identify models, and encourage counties to increase family and youth involvement and cultural competency through the stakeholder and decision-maker reports submitted as a result of the TBS Nine-Point Plan. Consequently, CDMH and the Super TACT Team began discussing various ways to address these needs and support counties and consumers in a productive dialogue and action plan for TBS.

### **2009 - 2010 Activities:**

- In March 2010, CDMH presented to the Federal Court and public a TBS County Mental Health Plan 2009 Progress Report. Two of the applicable program report criteria for the counties in 2009 and 2010 include: 1) convening TBS Stakeholder meetings and 2) convening TBS Decision-Maker meetings. The meetings were evaluated on the content of the reports submitted to CDMH, including family and youth participation.
- Continued CDMH monitoring and offer for technical assistance to support the MHP TBS reports for family and youth Stakeholder and Decision-Maker participation in 2010;
- Development of a family/youth-focused marketing letter to support TBS and the Nine-Point Plan which was distributed to a statewide family partner network and TACT contact list;
- Addition of a “Family & Youth” icon on the CDMH TBS website to ensure materials are available in a user-friendly manner;
- Outreach and education for family and youth members will be a standard component of the CDMH e-newsletters;
- Release and marketing of a TBS Coordination of Care Best Practices Manual with the guidance of consumers, family and youth advocates/organizations;
- Network and present at the May 2010 UACF Family Partner breakfast (California Mental Health Advocates for Children and Youth (CHMACY) Annual Conference) about team

outreach/recruiting; and

- Initiate conversations about creating family/youth action and network groups.

**Strategy Development:** The CDMH and Emily Q Settlement Team are developing the “California TBS Family and Youth Strategy” in an effort to increase the meaningful involvement, outreach, and engagement with family and youth members in a culturally competent manner.

In January 2010, CDMH recommended that the Super TACT form a workgroup to develop a family and youth strategy. The goal of the Workgroup discussions was through a consensus approach, to engage family and youth in a culturally competent way to promote the Nine-Point Plan and to improve local TBS efforts.

The TBS Family and Youth Strategy Workgroup convened in February, March, and April 2010 and have developed a framework to design the strategy. CDMH is appreciative for the participation of those who were able to provide input at the April brainstorming meeting. Representatives of the major stakeholder groups have been invited to participate in this Workgroup to plan, develop and execute the release of a strategy.<sup>1</sup>

However, the Workgroup identified that in order for the strategy design to be successful and meet the needs of the TBS community, the input and participation from the following mental health consumer and county groups would strengthen the strategies and activities: United

<sup>1</sup>The following stakeholders were represented: Rick Saletta, Special Master; Melinda Bird, Disability Rights California; Amber Burkan, California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN); Kathleen Carter Nishimura, CDMH Community Services; David Gray, Facilitator; Troy Konarski, CDMH Community Services; Steve Korosec, Facilitator; Rita McCabe, CDMH Community Services; Mike Reiter, APS; Cindy Robbins-Roth, Parent/Family Partner; Gail Schifsky, CDMH Community Services; Nicette Short, Policy Advocate; Sean Tracy, CDMH Community Services; Melinda Vaughn, DOF and Barbara Zwiag, CDMH Legal Services.

Advocates for Children and Families (UACF); National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI); the Client Network; County MHPs; California Mental Health Directors' Association (CMHDA); California Welfare Directors' Association (CWDA); and other key stakeholders may include the California Mental Health Planning Council, the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, and other specific TBS private providers.

The CDMH is grateful for the support it has received from private providers who have experience working with families and youth and who have invested their expertise and time to help develop this strategy. Cindy Robbins-Roth, Amber Burkan of the California Youth Empowerment Network (CAYEN) and APS Healthcare were very helpful in pulling together their resources to work on the strategy and identifying valuable contacts during our initial spring 2010 meetings.

**Proposed Workgroup Strategies:** In an effort to address the above mentioned challenges and assist the counties, CDMH is offering this framework for the Family and Youth Strategy which is designed to inform about TBS, encourage and engage at the local levels as partners in TBS, and training and building parent and youth capacity in all aspects of TBS. The proposed strategies include:

- ***Information and Communication***
- ***Engaging with Parents and Parent Organizations***
- ***Partnering with Other Agencies***
- ***Family, Youth and MHP Training***
- ***Evaluation***

**Next Steps:** In order for CDMH to finalize and implement the strategy, the next steps could include:

- Submitting this update to the Family and Youth Strategy Workgroup, Super TACT and Emily Q Settlement Team in April 2010 for feedback;
- Holding additional Workgroup meetings in Spring 2010 to develop the strategy and further engage key family and youth stakeholders to participate provide input to the strategies;
- Proposing the final draft strategy at the July 2010 Super TACT and Emily Q Settlement Team meetings;
- Releasing the strategy to the public and implement, as appropriate; and
- Providing a report to the Federal Court about Points 3, 6 and 8 of the Nine-Point Plan by or in December 2010.

**Contact Information:** If you are interested in participating or learning more about this strategy, please contact Kathleen Carter Nishimura at [Kathleen.Carter@dmh.ca.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Carter@dmh.ca.gov) or (916) 651-6613.

Thank you.